

THE PACIFIC COMMERCIAL ADVERTISER

WALTER G. SMITH : : : : : EDITOR.

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WARNING OF DEPRESSION.

A period of dull times not far ahead is tacitly predicted by financial observers on the Coast. The review of the third week in June by a San Francisco commercial paper says: "In the financial centers of the country there has been in evidence during the greater part of the week a well-defined tendency toward cautiousness in view of the menacing aspect of the world's political situation. General trade, however, has been in no way affected, although the sum total of business transacted has probably not been up to the standard of the few previous weeks. While most of the industries, and especially the building and textile industries, are fully as active as usual, reports from the great iron and steel centers indicate considerably less activity, and if this industry is to be taken as a barometer of the general trade situation, which it has been for the past few years, a period of commercial quietude is not far off."

With regard to the bearing of "the world's political situation" on commerce, the opinion has been heard in Honolulu that the Manchurian war has had considerable to do with the drop in sugar quickly following a short rising period. This view is based on consideration of the fact of France's heavy backing of Russian national loans, as well as that of a large amount of French money invested in Russia's home industries. Not only would the sugar market share in a general financial disturbance, but it would be directly affected through the facts mentioned because both France and Russia are beet sugar producers. After all, war is not the unmixed commercial boon to the countries that, for the time being, are non-belligerents which a thoughtless popular view is wont to regard it. Rumors of war, certainly, are a menace to financial equilibrium which few other conditions imaginable can rival. Peace and prosperity are twins in the individual nation and no doubt in the long run sustain a similar relationship in world affairs.

It is not necessarily to be inferred that Hawaii will suffer greatly from depression on the mainland. If sugar does not fall much lower than the present price, which for two or three years the present conditions would seem to forbid, our principal industry will continue to make good money. In that event, the outside depression would rather benefit Hawaii from its affording lower prices for merchandise imported. Both machinery bought abroad and the raw material for home-manufactured machinery would be cheaper, giving plantations needing it a good opportunity for new or additional equipment at moderate cost. Moreover, depression means cheap money, and, though also tight money in the depressed localities, not such outside thereof where safe and profitable investments offer. On the other hand, should fate decree that sugar will fall with other commodities, then Hawaii must simply meet the situation with the courage that, in similar circumstances, its people have on various occasions exhibited. While the cast of the die is awaited, however, is a time that should be improved so that an unfavorable issue may be met with the best possible front. In all matters of public expenditure a policy of wise economy should be pursued, as any increase of the burden of taxation in the midst of depression would be especially obnoxious. Every enterprise that contributes to a reduction of the imported merchandise bill, as well as to a swelling of island exports, ought to be encouraged.

Judge James B. Richardson of the Superior Court of Massachusetts discussed juries in an address to the law school of the Boston Y. M. C. A. He said that "the cases which at the present time come on for trial before a jury involve questions infinitely more intricate, complicated and difficult, and of much greater magnitude, than those which usually came before a jury 100 or even 50 years ago," while it seemed to him, he proceeded to say, "that in judgment, discernment and other qualifications the average jury at the present time is not so good as it was then." As to the selection of jurors, Judge Richardson considered that the difficulty was not so much in the law, as in the administration of it. Whatever, in this respect, may be said of the Hawaiian jury law is for the local bench and bar to discuss. But there may be food for home consumption in the following remarks of the Massachusetts jurist: "Besides moral character, the statute requires 'good judgment,' this means intelligence, the faculty and exercise of reason. What chance is there of such judgment, when ignorance, imbecility stupidity, race and class prejudices and affiliations with law-defying organizations are on the panel?"

"Mayor Dunne of Chicago makes the prediction that the next national democratic platform will have a plank calling for government ownership of railroads," the Springfield Republican says, commenting: "Quite likely, but whether it will prove a great vote-getter or not depends much upon the attitude meantime of the transportation interests toward the policy of effective government control of rates. At present these interests are doing all they can to make public ownership irresistibly popular." The question remains whether the easier campaign for satisfactory transportation is the one being undertaken to compel the "interests" to adopt a proper attitude or one to bring the people to adopt government control. A similar problem exists with regard to all public utilities now in private hands. The people must in the end have things done right, but sometimes it's an o'er long road to be traveled to find the right way.

For the first time in the history of Hilo, the Fourth of July was celebrated without any literary exercises. Honolulu on the same occasion only obtained an orator at about 11:59 beforehand. Yet all the island woods are full of professional speakers, with not a few amateur welkin-ringers. Sometimes the Fourth has been rather short in public pyrotechnics simply because the purchase of fireworks had not been thought of in time. Perhaps a similar reason explains the difficulty of humanizing the eagle's scream on the great day. Whoever may be desired to speak ought to have a few days given him to prepare his address.

In declaring that they would wage active opposition in their own country to war against Norway, the labor organizations of Sweden offered a good cue for the working classes of all nations to adopt. The people of republics and of well-limited monarchies—who, equally with the people under varying degrees of despotism, must chiefly bear the burdens of war—have the principal responsibility upon themselves when the issue of peace or the sword comes to their own nations. Probably with such nations it is mostly politicians and militarists who play for war, but if the people do not enter the game it will still be peace.

One of the best evidences that Hilo is progressing toward metropolitanism is found in a rebuke the Tribune gives to its Board of Trade for prematurely kicking about the mail service. With the Hilo press developing a civic independence, there dawns a better future for Hilo. The Tribune admits that Hilo is getting an average of three mails from Honolulu, and, giving credit to Superintendent Carr for endeavors to afford as efficient a mail service as possible, says that altogether from the past experience Hilo has no kick either against the department or the steamship company in this respect.

If Congress does not pass a law to get away from Attorney General Moody's ruling that the Federal eight-hour law must apply to Panama canal construction, then the work will cost millions more money than it otherwise would. Unless the wages of the laborers be also compulsorily made as high for an eight-hour day as for one of ten hours or longer, it is hard to see how the laborers will be benefited by the application of the law.

Denizens of skyscrapers in New York City saw snow falling on June 20, with the thermometer registering 70 degrees. It turned to rain before reaching the streets. An unseasonable fall of snow in Wall street would be calamitous to the shorn lambs.

With the best grade of Hawaiian coffee rating a point higher than any other country's best in the San Francisco market, Hawaii ought to do something with coffee—duffy or no duffy. Increase the product of our best and the trick is turned.

Missouri has begun a legal war on Standard Oil. Just as well it is legal. The bowie-knife is too short in the haft for octopus hunting.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT STARTS WITHOUT FUSS

County government on Hawaii was started going with considerably less fuss than was shown in Honolulu. The supervisors were called to order on Saturday morning, with Supervisors J. T. Moir, S. L. Desha, D. K. Makua-kane, Antone Fernandez, J. F. Wood and M. K. Kalaiwaa present. Supervisor Moir was chosen temporary chairman. An adjournment was taken until 2 p. m. of the same day to allow O. T. Shipman to secure his bond. At that time the bonds of all the county officers were approved and the supervisors qualified before Judge Parsons.

A resolution introduced by D. Makua-kane in favor of retaining all captains of police and clerks who had held office on Hawaii under the Territory, through the month of July, or until the Board of Supervisors should recommend changes, caused considerable debate, but was finally passed by a vote of 4 to 3.

After some minor matters were brought up and two committees appointed the Board adjourned.

OREGON COMING THIS WAY AGAIN

Once more the famous "Bull Dog of the Navy," the battleship Oregon, is to visit Hawaii, this time en route from the Philippines to the Bremerton Navy Yard, to go out of commission and to receive a general overhauling. She has been on the Asiatic station for two years.

The plans of overhauling are no ordinary repairs but call for a radical reconstruction so as to bring the vessel thoroughly up to date after the manner of the recent work on the Indiana. The Oregon is too large to be docked at Mare Island, so she will go out of commission at the Bremerton Navy Yard on Puget sound. She will be out of commission several months.

The changes contemplate having the eight inch turrets driven by electricity, also an improvement in the stowage and handling facilities for ammunition and increased accommodation and comforts for the crew.

A native of India, who has lost a large amount of money through the insolvency of an English merchant, explained the English insolvency laws as follows: "In Burma the white man who wants to become insolvent goes into business, and gets lots of goods, and does not pay for them. He then gets all the money he can together, say 30,000 rupees (a rupee is 33 cents), and puts all of it except 100 rupees away where no one can find it. With the 100 rupees he goes to a judge of the court and tells him he wants to become bankrupt. The judge then calls all the lawyers together, likewise all the men to whom the white man owes money, and says: 'This man is insolvent, but he wishes to give you all that he has got, so he has asked me to divide this 100 rupees among you all.' The judge thereupon gives the lawyers 90 rupees, and the remaining 10 rupees to the other men. Then the insolvent goes home to England."

An instance of the application of a precocious knowledge of the law by a child occurred in a Parisian school last January. In France education is obligatory, but the law cannot compel children to remain at school after the age of thirteen. This law, needless to remark, is usually a dead letter, but on the occasion in question a pupil suddenly got up in the middle of a lesson, gathered up his books, placed them neatly in his desk, took up his hat and moved toward the door. "Where are you going?" asked the teacher, with a certain amount of acerbity. "Sir," replied the boy, with irritating nonchalance, "I was thirteen years of age four minutes ago, and you have no longer any right to keep me at school."

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